



[Home](#) › [Statistics](#) › [Labour](#) › [Earnings and working conditions](#) › [Industrial Disputes, Australia](#) › June 2023

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Industrial Disputes, Australia

The number of disputes (strikes or lockouts), employees involved and working days lost; cause of dispute; duration; and the reason work resumed

Reference period June 2023

Released 14/09/2023

On this page

[Key statistics](#)

[Overview](#)

[Long-term trends](#)

[Industry](#)

[States and territories](#)

[Cause of dispute](#)

[Working days lost](#)

[Reason work resumed](#)

[Data downloads](#)

[Methodology](#)

Key statistics

In the June quarter 2023:

- 71 disputes occurred.
- 10,500 employees were involved and 10,200 working days lost.
- disputes occurred in 7 industries and in 8 states and territories.

During the year ended June 2023, there were 213 disputes and a total of 67,100 working days lost.

	Quarter		Year ended	
	March Quarter 2023	June Quarter 2023	June Quarter 2022	June Quarter 2023
Number of disputes (no.)				
New	33	57	143	203
Total	41	71	154	213
Employees involved ('000)				
New	4.1	9.6	143.7	53.3
Total	4.7	10.5	145.3	54.3
Working days lost ('000)	7.7	10.2	234.6	67.1

Overview

In the June quarter 2023, there were:

- 71 disputes, 30 more than the previous quarter.
- 10,500 employees involved, an increase from 4,700 in the previous quarter.
- 10,200 working days lost, an increase from 7,700 in the previous quarter.

Year ended estimates:

- 213 disputes occurred, 59 more than in the previous year.
- 67,100 working days were lost, 167,500 less than in the previous year.

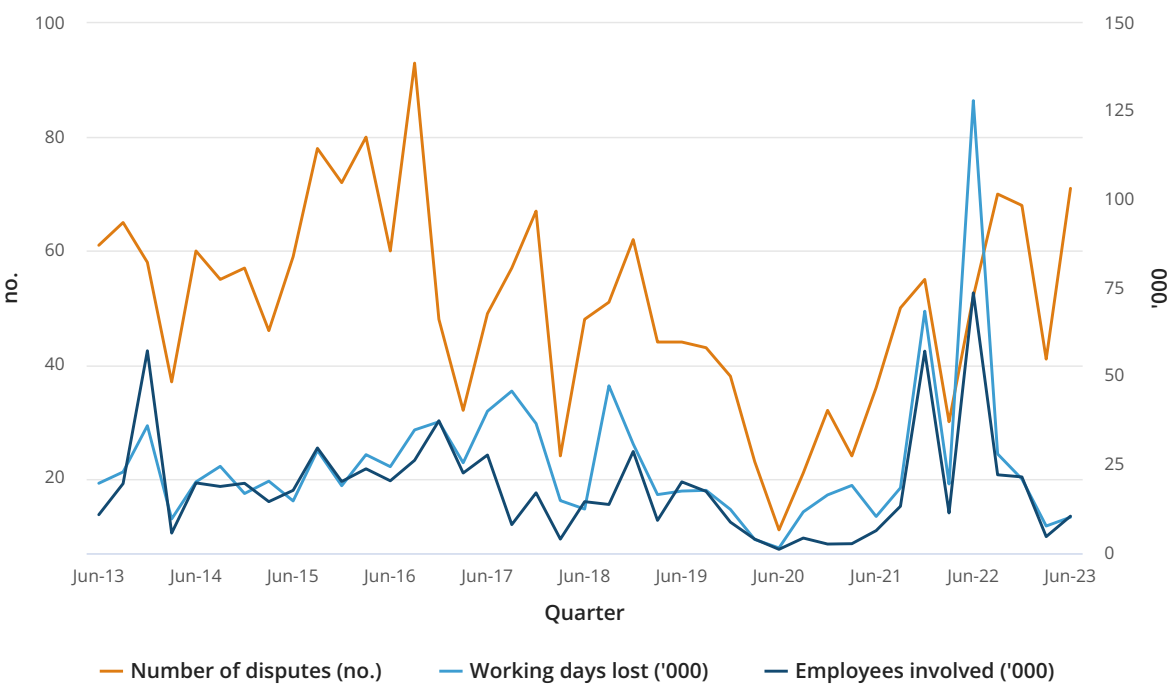
Industrial Disputes which occurred during the quarter

	Number of disputes		Employees involved		Working days lost
	New (no.)	Total (no.)	New ('000)	Total ('000)	('000)
June Quarter 2021	30	36	6.0	6.4	10.4
September Quarter 2021	39	50	11.7	13.3	18.5
December Quarter 2021	37	55	50.6	57.2	68.5
March Quarter 2022	22	30	10.1	11.4	19.6
June Quarter 2022	45	52	71.2	73.7	128.1
September Quarter 2022	60	70	21.2	22.2	28.1
December Quarter 2022	53	68	18.4	21.6	21.0
March Quarter 2023	33	41	4.1	4.7	7.7
June Quarter 2023	57	71	9.6	10.5	10.2

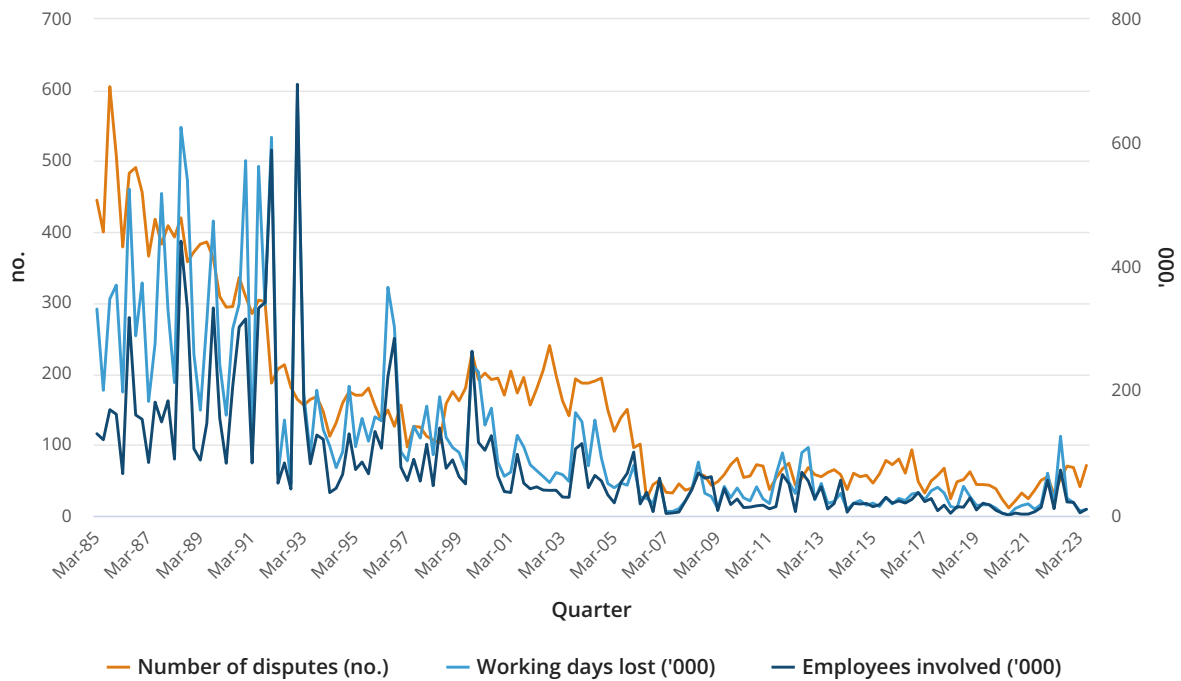
Long-term trends

The level of industrial disputation over recent years is considerably lower than in the 1980's and prior decades.

Industrial disputes in the last 10 years, Australia



Industrial disputes historical series, Australia



Industry

In the June quarter, disputes occurred in seven industries. Over a third (37%) of the total working days lost were in the Construction industry.

Industrial disputes which occurred during the quarter, industry

	March Quarter 2023		June Quarter 2023	
	Working days lost ('000)	Working days lost per thousand employees (no.)	Working days lost ('000)	Working days lost per thousand employees (no.)
Mining				
Coal mining	-	-	-	-
Other mining	np	np	np	np
Manufacturing				
Metal product etc (a)	2.2	6.6	0.7	2.2
Other manufacturing	0.3	0.6	np	np
Construction	1.7	1.6	3.7	3.4
Transport, postal & warehousing	1.0	1.6	1.6	2.6
Education & training; Health care & social assistance	1.3	0.4	2.6	0.8
Other industries (a)	np	np	1.1	0.2
All industries	7.7	0.6	10.2	0.8

- nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

np not available for publication but included in totals where applicable, unless otherwise indicated

(a) see Glossary - [Industry \(https://www.abs.gov.au/methodologies/industrial-disputes-australia-methodology/mar-2023#glossary\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/methodologies/industrial-disputes-australia-methodology/mar-2023#glossary) - for details of industries included

States and territories

Disputes occurred in eight states and territories in the June quarter, with nearly a third (32%) of the total working days lost occurring in Queensland.

Industrial disputes which occurred during the quarter, states and territories

	March Quarter 2023		June Quarter 2023	
	Working days lost ('000)	Working days lost per thousand employees (no.)	Working days lost ('000)	Working days lost per thousand employees (no.)
New South Wales	2.5	0.6	2.5	0.6
Victoria	2.2	0.7	2.7	0.8
Queensland	1.6	0.6	3.2	1.3
South Australia	0.6	0.8	0.5	0.6
Western Australia	0.8	0.6	0.9	0.6
Tasmania	-	-	np	np
Northern Territory	-	-	0.1	0.7
Australian Capital Territory	-	-	np	np
Australia	7.7	0.6	10.2	0.8

- nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

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Cause of dispute

Most industrial disputes are Enterprise Bargaining (EB) related. Over the past 10 years, disputes over employment conditions have generally been the most prevalent.

EB related issues were the cause of 85% of disputes (23 of 27) which ended in the March quarter 2023.

Cause of dispute for disputes which ended during the quarter

	December Quarter 2022			March Quarter 2023		
	Number of disputes (no.)	Employees involved ('000)	Working days lost ('000)	Number of disputes (no.)	Employees involved ('000)	Working days lost ('000)
Enterprise Bargaining related						
Remuneration	17	1.6	2.8	4	0.2	0.1
Employment conditions	37	23.2	20.2	19	1.7	3.4
Other	3	0.5	0.2	-	-	-
Non-Enterprise Bargaining related						
Remuneration	-	-	-	-	-	-
Employment conditions	1	-	0.1	-	-	-
Health and safety	-	-	-	1	1.2	0.8
Job security	-	-	-	-	-	-
Managerial policy	1	0.4	0.5	1	0.3	-
Union issues	-	-	-	1	-	-
Other	1	1.0	0.6	1	0.2	0.2
Total	60	26.7	24.4	27	3.5	4.4

- nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

Working days lost

Working days lost is a measure of the length of a dispute, relative to the number of employees involved.

Of the 27 disputes which ended in the March quarter, 18 lasted up to and including 1 day. These disputes had:

- 2,900 employees involved; and
- 1,800 working days lost.

Working days lost for disputes which ended during the quarter

	December Quarter 2022			March Quarter 2023		
	Number of disputes (no.)	Employees involved ('000)	Working days lost ('000)	Number of disputes (no.)	Employees involved ('000)	Working days lost ('000)
Up to and including 1 day	22	22.7	11.3	18	2.9	1.8
Over 1 day and up to including 2 days	13	1.5	2.1	2	0.2	0.3
Over 2 and less than 5 days	15	2.1	6.9	4	0.4	1.6
5 and less than 10 days	7	0.2	1.6	2	-	0.2
10 days and over	3	0.1	2.5	1	0.1	0.6
Total	60	26.7	24.4	27	3.5	4.4

- nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

Reason work resumed

The reason work resumed relates to the last day of action taken. Resumption of work can occur without resolution to the issues that triggered the dispute.

There was a pre-determined return to work for 89% of disputes (24 of 27) which ended in the March quarter 2023.

Reason work resumed for disputes which ended during the quarter

	December Quarter 2022			March Quarter 2023		
	Number of disputes (no.)	Employees involved ('000)	Working days lost ('000)	Number of disputes (no.)	Employees involved ('000)	Working days lost ('000)
Negotiation without intervention of a third party	6	1.5	6.8	1	1.2	0.8
State legislation	-	-	-	-	-	-
Federal legislation	2	0.1	0.2	-	-	-
Pre-determined return to work	49	23.8	16.0	24	2.2	3.5
Resumption without negotiation	3	1.4	1.4	2	0.2	0.2
Mediation	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other reasons	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	60	26.7	24.4	27	3.5	4.4

- nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

Data downloads

Time Series Spreadsheets

[⬇ Download all \(480.4 KB\)](#)

Table 1: Industrial disputes which occurred during the period

[⬇ Download XLSX](#)
[58.29 KB]

Table 2a: Industrial disputes which occurred during the period, working days lost, industry

[⬇ Download XLSX](#)
[53.75 KB]

Table 2b: Industrial disputes which occurred during the period, working days lost per thousand employees, industry

↓ [Download XLSX](#)

[53.49 KB]

Table 3a: Industrial disputes which occurred during the period, working days lost, states and territories

↓ [Download XLSX](#)

[62.82 KB]

Table 3b: Industrial disputes which occurred during the period, working days lost per thousand employees, states and territories

↓ [Download XLSX](#)

[61.61 KB]

Table 4a: Industrial disputes which ended during the period, cause of dispute

↓ [Download XLSX](#)

[91.37 KB]

Table 4b: Industrial disputes which ended during the period, working days lost per employee involved

↓ [Download XLSX](#)

[62.85 KB]

Table 4c: Industrial disputes which ended during the period, reason work resumed

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[78.07 KB]

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Previous catalogue number

This release previously used catalogue number 6321.0.55.001.

Methodology

[Industrial Disputes, Australia methodology, June 2023](#)